

From: Wright.Wendy@epa.gov
To: [Reichgott, Christine](#); [Somers, Elaine](#); [Wright, Wendy](#)
Subject: Caspian Tern Nesting Habitat Management East Sand
Date: Wednesday, March 18, 2015 9:48:22 AM
Attachments: [R10ETPASC601003182015094944.pdf](#)

3-17-15
LWL**US Army Corps of Engineers**
BUILDING STRONG.Draft EA: Caspian Tern Nesting Habitat Reduction*Posted 3/3/2015*

PUBLIC NOTICE: DRAFT
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
Caspian Tern Nesting Habitat Reduction on East Sand Island, Clatsop County, Oregon

CENWP-PM-E-15-02
15-Day Notice Issue Date: March 3, 2015
Expiration Date: March 17, 2015

Related Content

Related Story Draft EA: Caspian Tern Nesting Habitat Management, East Sand Island

Interested parties are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District is seeking public comment on the Draft Environmental Assessment for Caspian Tern Habitat Reduction on East Sand Island, Clatsop County, Oregon. The Corps proposes to reduce nesting acreage at the East Sand Island Caspian tern colony in the Columbia River Estuary from 1.58 to 1.00 acres in order to lessen the number of nesting pairs on the island. By reducing the number of nesting pairs, this project aims to reduce tern predation in the long-term on juvenile salmonids listed under the Endangered Species Act. The desired reduction in nesting pairs is in response to unexpectedly high nesting density exhibited by terns at the colony.

The proposed action would address actions called for in the 2008 / 2010 biological opinion for the FCRPS (Federal Columbia River Power System). This biological opinion requires implementation of the 2005 Caspian Tern Management Plan and evaluation of the effectiveness of the plan. The proposed action is considered adaptive management toward meeting the goals of the opinion and plan, specifically with respect to number of nesting pairs of Caspian terns at the East Sand Island colony.

Environmental document: The draft Environmental Assessment for the proposed activity is available for public review and comment on our website at:

<http://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/Media/Announcements.aspx>
or by email to: caspianternnestinghabitatmanagement@usace.army.mil

Requests for additional information and comments regarding the draft EA should be directed to Paul Schmidt at 503-808-4772 or by email to Paul.A.Schmidt@usace.army.mil, or at the address below. Mailed comments must be postmarked by the above closing date and sent to:

District Engineer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District
Attn: CENWP-PM-E / Paul Schmidt
P.O. Box 2946
Portland, OR 97208-2946

In your response, refer to the above public notice number (CENWP-PM-E-15-02), title and date. A "no comment" response will be assumed if no response is received prior to or postmarked by the expiration date above.

Somers, Elaine

From: Somers, Elaine
Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2015 6:04 PM
To: caspianternnestinghabitatmanagement@usace.army.mil
Cc: Reichgott, Christine; Wright, Wendy
Subject: FW: CENWP-PM-E-15-02: Caspian Tern Nesting Habitat Management East Sand Island Draft EA - EPA Comments

District Engineer, US Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District
 Attn: CENWP-PM-E-/ Paul Schmidt
 P.O. Box 2946
 Portland, OR 97208-2946

Subject: Caspian Tern Nesting Habitat Management East Sand Island Draft EA, 3/3/15
 EPA Region 10 Project Number 15-0026-COE

Dear Mr. Schmidt:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the Caspian Tern Nesting Habitat Management East Sand Island Draft Environmental Assessment, dated March 3, 2015. We are submitting comments in accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. We appreciate receiving notification of availability of the EA. Our comments and recommendations are provided below:

- EA, Page 31: The EA indicates there have been two incidents (in 2011 and 2013) of entanglement of California brown pelicans in dissuasion materials. In the Final EA, we recommend addressing this issue in more detail. Indicate what measures would be taken to prevent entanglement of brown pelicans (or other species), and how it would be remedied if it does occur.
- EA, Pages 9, 40: We note (p. 9) that predation by gulls, great horned owls, and raccoons has been an issue at several Corps constructed islands and that a depredation permit has been obtained from USFWS for predator control. In the Final EA we recommend including more information about the provisions of the depredation permits, predation methods used, and species covered/affected by the permits. Also, clarify whether this same information applies to predator management discussed on page 40 of the EA, which is occurring at interior sites in Oregon and California.
- EA, Page 40: We are concerned that due to drought, many potential alternative nesting locations for Caspian terns will not be suitable. It is unclear whether or not there is actually enough alternative habitat that would be both suitable and permissible for the Caspian terns. Please provide more information to clarify availability of suitable habitat with expected drought conditions.
- EA, Page 16: In 2011, a complete breeding failure occurred on East Sand Island for the Caspian terns – no chicks were produced. The EA does not explain why this failure occurred, whether it could potentially re-occur due to proposed management actions and, if so, what would be done in response to this situation. We recommend this information be provided in the Final EA.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment. If you have questions or would like to discuss these issues, please feel free to contact me at (206) 553-2966 or via electronic mail at somers.elaine@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Elaine Somers
 Environmental Review and Sediment Management Unit